

TALKING POINTS FOR ADDI

29 July 1986

Nicaragua: Developments in the InsurgencyFighting has been relatively light for the past two weeks.

- A Sandinista military helicopter crashed in the Atlantic Coast Region on 19 July, killing 22. Although the rebels tried to claim responsibility, the governments' account of mechanical failure seems more likely.
- Seven government soldiers were killed by a mine near Wiwili on the 23rd, according to Managua press. Rebel troops have been using mines more frequently in recent months on roads heavily traveled by the military.

helo
crashWiwili
mine

Guerrilla leaders of the Nicaraguan Democratic Force (FDN) approved the establishment of a new Regional Commanders' Council on 19 July to advise the FDN military commander and give the military arm a voice in the National Directorate.

FDN
military
group

- Former National Guard staff officer Enrique Bermudez was confirmed as military commander and president of the Council.
- Each of the 28 guerrilla regional commanders--approximately equivalent to battalion commanders and above--will sit on the council, which will have jurisdiction over personnel, political, financial, judicial, and religious matters affecting the rebel force.

25X1

The formation of this regional commanders' council grew out of the ongoing rivalry between peasant and ex-National Guard factions of the FDN leadership, and the military's suspicion that politicians in the United Nicaraguan Opposition (UNO) were ignoring their basic interests.

peasant
vs.
n't'l
guard
rivalry

- The peasant faction holds most of the regional command positions and has some bright, charismatic leaders, many of whom resent the power of the ex-National Guard officers on Bermudez' staff.
- Most of the peasant commanders are illiterate, however, and utterly disdain staff work--preferring to lead troops in the field.
- Bermudez has managed to finesse the situation by agreeing to the council and allowing it to propose a list of suitable candidates from which he will chose a second-in-command.

Ops
vs.
staff!

25X1

-- He probably will choose one of the more capable and literate peasant commanders but hopes to retain the services of the ex-National Guard officers because only they have the military training and disposition for staff work.

-- Bermudez himself is well respected by all factions and appears to have both the political and interpersonal skills to make the two sides work together.

*Bermudez
accepted*

25X1

One of the more significant developments of the past week was an attack--presumably by agents of the Nicaraguan Government--on a house in Tegucigalpa, Honduras during a gathering of rebel leaders.

-- The attack, which occurred at 11PM on 23 July, consisted of several machine gun bursts and homemade explosives hurled from a passing car.

*Attack on
FON in
Tegu.*

-- Two rebel commanders were slightly wounded, and a number of parked cars were damaged or destroyed. Enrique Bermudez--a likely target--had left the party an hour earlier.

-- The Honduran Government was embarrassed by the attack because it drew press attention to the presence of Nicaraguan guerrilla commanders in an exclusive neighborhood only a few blocks from President Azcona's residence.

25X1

25X1 25X1

The Sandinistas have publicly warned both Honduras and Costa Rica that they would be playing with fire by supporting the guerrillas, and they reportedly have encouraged regional leftists to prepare terrorist attacks.

Recent Military Activity



708240 (545340) 7-86

Anti-Sandinista Rebel Organizations July 1986

